

hold on to something which makes both parties uncomfortable and makes the kids more unhappy."

In 1966 the Liberals and Lévesque lost an election. He walked out of the Liberal party convention of 1967, taking some fifty of the 1,500 delegates with him, and founded the Mouvement souveraineté-association. A year later

the MSA merged with another group, the Ralliement national, to form the Parti Québécois, which elected Lévesque its first president.

In 1973 the PQ received 30 per cent of the votes in the provincial election, though it took only 6 of 110 seats in the Assembly. In 1976 the PQ ran effectively against the incumbent Liberals, and got 41 per cent of the vote and 71 seats.

Claude Ryan

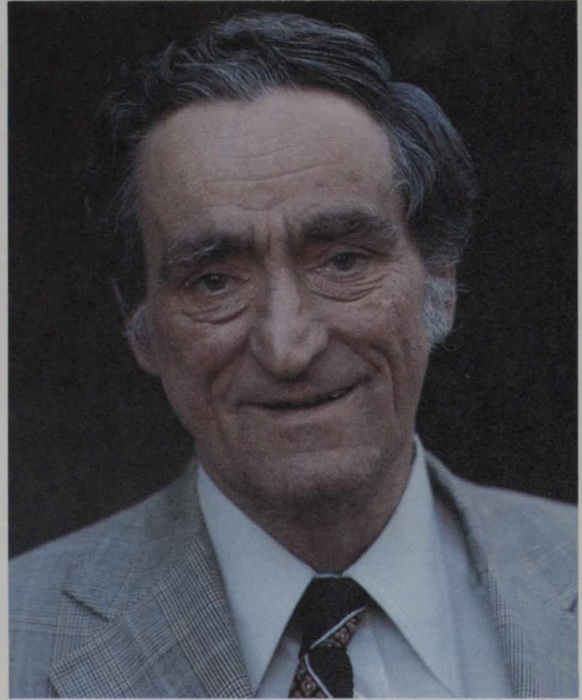
Claude Ryan, who was 54 last January, is a devout man, committed, religious and austere.

An intellectual who had remained outside party politics, he was elected leader of the Quebec Liberal Party in 1978 after a reluctant decision to quit as publisher of *Le Devoir*, Montreal's most influential newspaper.

Ryan studied social work and industrial relations at the Université de Montréal. He began his career as secretary-general of L'Action Catholique Canadienne, co-ordinating lay activist groups. He left it in 1962 after seventeen years (including a sabbatical year in Rome studying church history), joined *Le Devoir* as an editorial writer and became its publisher two years later.

Le Devoir, with Claude Ryan's voice on the editorial page, came to exert a powerful influence on the shaping of public opinion in Quebec. Ryan's views were consulted by the political and intellectual elite of the province, earning him the sobriquet of "the conscience of Quebec." A colleague has described him as a man "in the tradition of spiritual advisers to men of power."

He is celebrated for frugality and for hard work. As a journalist, he has criticized Pierre Trudeau as often as he has René Lévesque and he backed the Conservative Robert Stanfield in the 1968 election. In 1973 Lévesque asked Ryan to run as a PQ candidate but Ryan refused and backed the Liberals. In 1976 he endorsed the PQ two days before the election, but it was not an easy decision. He wrote prophetically in *Le Devoir*: "To elect a PQ government Monday is to take the risk of being



dragged afterwards into an adventure whose end we cannot foresee . . . we must choose the [risk] that most surely opens the door to the future."

He is a complex and serious man. Graham Fraser, writing in *Maclean's*, says he has two styles.

"In writing, reading a text and speaking English, he can appear formal, didactic, obscure and ponderous, but in conversation he can be blunt, funny, earthy, almost brutally frank—punctuating his stories with a raucous laugh that bites like a chain saw."

Some Earlier Proposals

Rowell-Sirois Commission. During the Depression the federal Rowell-Sirois Commission proposed that the central government be given responsibility for the new unemployment insurance and old-age pension plans by giving it a monopoly on personal income taxes, corporate taxes and succession duties. Quebec and other provinces resisted.

Tremblay Commission. In 1953 Quebec's Tremblay Commission proposed sovereignty of

provinces in their jurisdictions; equality of federal and provincial governments; fiscal autonomy of provinces; recognition of the Quebec government as the national government of French Canadians.

Royal Commission on Bilingualism. In 1963 the Canadian government created the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. It found that Quebec regards itself as an autonomous society and expects to be recognized as such.

Pépin-Robarts Task Force. In 1977 the central government created the Pépin-Robarts Task Force on National Unity which held extensive hearings and recommended fundamental constitutional changes in the structure of government and the division of powers.